**The Gift of Tongues, No. 7 – BD31-02**

This morning the gift tongues, the 7th in the series. Just briefly to review, we have seen in the book of 1 Corinthians that tongues, prophecy, and knowledge were of a temporary character. We saw that prophecy and knowledge were to be abolished or rendered inoperative upon the arrival of something that was to be completed which was the New Testament Scriptures. Tongues, we’re told, were to die out gradually, of themselves, as their sign and authentication purposes were fulfilled. Tongues, we found, were to pass away before the gifts of prophecy and knowledge do, and we found that these gifts belong only in the infancy stage of the church institution.

In 1 Corinthians 13:13, we’re told that “agape” love, or spirituality, is greater than faith in God and His Word, or than hope of divine viewpoint, which is doctrine in the human spirit. The greatest thing is to be filled with the spirit. It is greater than hope. It is greater than faith, for the others cannot follow without this filling.

Then in 1 Corinthians 14, we find that Paul treats tongues and prophecy and knowledge as gifts which are confined to the New Testament church. These were superseded by a completed New Testament canon of Scripture. When Paul is giving instruction in these chapters that we are now looking at in 1 Corinthians 12 through 14, he is giving instructions for the use of those gifts in his day. He is not giving instruction in those chapters as a guide for us to use tongues and prophecy and knowledge today, for the gifts no longer exist.

Actually if Paul were giving instruction for us to use today concerning these three gifts, he would, in effect, contradict himself with what he said in 1 Corinthians 13 about the temporary nature of these gifts. In 1 Corinthians 14:1-12 we found that tongues were an inferior way of communicating divine viewpoint to prophecy. Prophecy was much superior. In 1 Corinthians 14:13-20 we found that tongues was an inferior method of worship, of prayer, and of praise. The purpose of tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:21-22, we saw, was a sign to unbelieving Jews of their national judgment. It was also an indication in the book of Acts that various ethnic groups, Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles, were included in the new age of grace and in the body of Christ.

So if you’ll turn to 1 Corinthians 14, we’re going to pick up the chapter at verse 23 this morning. 1 Corinthians 14:23-25 tell us about the comparative effects of tongues and prophecy. Verse 23 tells us the effect of tongues: “If therefore the whole church be come together into one place and all speak with tongues, and there coming those that are unlearned (or unbelievers), will they not say, ‘Ye are mad?’”

Here is the church in the city of Corinth gathered together in public worship just as we are here this morning. That church in the nature of the case is made up mainly of Gentiles. Because it is a great commercial center, there undoubtedly were many Jewish people who were also present in the city, and perhaps some in the service.

Now in this service, suddenly people began using the gift of tongues and they create a bedlam. Everyone is talking in tongues. Some of these are actually exercising the legitimate gift of tongues, speaking in a true foreign language. Some of them, under the emotional domination of the soul, are merely speaking gibberish as was the practice of the pagan priests and priestesses. Many of the women would be faking the gift of tongues for they were not given the gift of tongues here in the public assembly. And a visitor who would walk into a service like that looks around and listens to what’s going on, and he says, “This place is filled with lunatics.” Now if you have ever been in a Pentecostal meeting today, you will understand this passage of Scripture today, you will understand this passage of Scripture exactly because that’s what this is describing, the kind of conditions that exist in Pentecostalism today. When you walk into a Pentecostal meeting, the furor and the bedlam and the noise and the screaming and the swooning and the falling on the floor and the working over of people for the casting out of illnesses and demons and the shouting out of people in tongues and other people shouting interpretations, this gives you the impression that this place is full of lunatics.

Now what Paul is saying is that this is the impression that the unlearned, those who were devoid of knowledge of spiritual things would think, and also the unbelievers, the unconverted pagans and Jews would think, because most spiritual understanding is brought to those visitors from tongues minus interpretation. Any time a person walks into a local church service, you should be able to walk out of some understanding concerning the Word of God. If you find that it is the pattern of your experience to be able to walk into a place and never walk out with any information concerning the things of God, you should stop walking into that place and walk into one that is doing the job.

Tongues is not a sign for Gentiles, so the confusion in these meetings in Corinth was an offense to the unbelieving Gentiles. The Jews who may have been present, for whom tongues was a sign that national judgment was coming upon them, were repelled by the confusion, and neither Jew nor Gentile could understand what was being said.

On the other hand, beginning at verse 24, we have the effects of prophecy in a church service. That is, the gift that delivers revelations from God in the language of the people that they understood. Verse 24 says, “But if all prophesy and there cometh one that believeth not (or one unlearned), he is convicted of all and he is judged of all. Thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face he shall worship and report that God is in you of the truth.” Unbelievers and unlearned are convicted and judged in their hearts by the exercise of the prophetic gift, these direct revelations from God, because they understand these, so they are effected. The truths of doctrine that we share with one another out of the Word of God was what the gift of prophecy delivered to the New Testament church before the New Testament Scriptures were completed.

Now these people who heard this gift exercised found themselves exposed to other instances that struck home. They found conviction upon themselves for their own status, for their sin. The result was that they worshipped God and that they had to admit that what they heard was the truth about themselves, and they had to admit that God was indeed among this group of people that they had come into.

Now that’s the difference, the comparative value, as it existed in the New Testament church of tongues and prophecy. If these gifts were in existence today, it would be the same thing. Tongues had very limited use—these foreign languages that nobody understands, especially without an interpreter had very limited use, but being able to tell what God thinks, bringing doctrinal understanding, is of great value.

Now beginning at verse 26 therefore, the apostle Paul lays down regulations for tongues. Here’s the line of instruction. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul has related tongues to the other spiritual gifts, all of which were designed for edification of the church—for building up Christians as believers. In 1 Corinthians 13 Paul has related tongues to spirituality, and he has shown the temporary nature of the gift of tongues. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul has shown the superiority of the prophetic gift over tongues, and he gives rules now for the use of tongues in the New Testament church—mind you, not for today, but in the time when these gifts existed, here is how they were to be used.

Now if the modern tongues movement, if the Pentecostal churches were ever to obey these rules, the movement would die out overnight. Pentecostal churches know that they cannot afford to subject themselves to the rules that Paul lays down here in 1 Corinthians 14 because the movement would die. It would collapse overnight. It is structured on being able to violate these rules. Pentecostalism, as Marjoe discovered, has exactly what the people want. They want an emotional experience that blanks out the directive side of their mentality so that their emotions are commanding their personality and directing them. God says that when emotions come in, this violates the order that He has placed in our souls where our minds filled with doctrine are to guide us. Once emotions takes over, grace leaves. An emotionally dominated soul cannot function under the grace of God because grace only functions through doctrine. The modern tongues movement, because it wants to operate with the emotions ruling the soul, must violate these regulations.

In verse 26 we read, “How is it then brethren when ye come together every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation? Let all things be done unto edifying.” These were the directions for a New Testament church service before the New Testament Scriptures were completed. You will notice that the main purpose of a church service is given at the end of verse 26. “Let all things be done unto edifying.” There is no other purpose for people gathering in a local church except for the building up of the believers through knowledge of the Word of God. Edification therefore is not inspiration. What you get in the average church service is a big dose of inspiration. But edification comes only through learning doctrine. That is the thing alone which will build your soul to spiritual maturity. You can never develop as a Christian because somebody tells you some inspiring stories or gives you some pointed illustration. Inspiration merely meets some emotional charged, some emotional challenged, some emotional mental images and suggestions, and you walk out and you feel great for a while. This is what is being done to the average Christian. He is being emotionally oriented to God and so his soul collapses in its daily functioning.

Worship is not possible therefore apart from the learning of doctrine. You cannot worship God in a church service unless you have a teacher standing up in front of you and you are learning doctrine. Emotion is a deceit that is practiced upon the people of God. But when doctrine is clearly taught, and it is applied, it bears its fruit.

Somebody the other day came up and told me that they had been listening to Dr. Vernon McGee on the radio, and that he had given an illustration of what the light of doctrine does for a person. He indicated the response of people to doctrine identified what the person is. He used a very amusing illustration. He said that when he was a boy, probably here in Texas (he’s from Texas). He said when he was a boy sometimes he would forget, out on the farm, to feed some of the animals in the barn. So after it was dark and after supper and when it was late, his father would make him go back out to the barn to feed the animals that he had neglected. So he said he would get a lantern and he would walk out from the house to the barn and he would throw open the barn doors and walk in with this lantern here in the darkness. And the moment he walked in and flooded the inside of the barn with the light of that lantern, he said the birds that were perched around the barn would begin to sing, but the rats would run. Whenever you come with the lantern of the illumination of doctrine, the birds begin to sing because they’re heavenly creatures connected with God, but the rats begin to run.

Now you needn’t kid yourself because you’ve got some good Christian friends and you hate to think of them in this category. You needn’t kid yourself for one moment that anybody that in your experience who has deserted a place where the lantern of the Word of God is shining doctrine clear and true, and is not singing the joys of heaven, and the thrills of gratitude to God for information that He has shared with us, is joining the rats who are scurrying. And I’ll tell you something else about the rats. The only place they go to is darkness. Now you get yourself over the notion that you think you’re going out to some greater light, to some more devoted service, to some finer expression and fulfillment, because when the rats leave that barn illuminated by the light, the only place to go is out in the darkness and that’s exactly where they go.

Now Paul is trying to get across to these people that those of you who are negative in your response to the Word of God are the rats who are running for darkness. That’s why you’re resisting—not because of something with the Word of God. You don’t even have to like the speaker. As a matter of fact, he probably doesn’t think too much of you, but that’s irrelevant to the issue of the Word of God. When you become a grown-up Christian, it makes no difference who is delivering the truth. You’re not hung up on somebody’s personality. But when you’ve got little peanut people in the congregation they’re hung up on personality. They think they have a great big point on, “Well, it’s not what he says. It’s how he says it.” Which is translated, “I’m a rat and I want the darkness.” Because, as John 3:20 says, “For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light. He that cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved.” And you don’t know the deeds of your fine Christian friends that they don’t want reproof, so don’t kid yourself. “But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be manifest that they are wrought in god.”

Now our fellowship, as John tells us, is with the Lord in the light, not in the darkness. In the darkness there is no fellowship. That’s why doctrine is important. Without the lantern of the doctrine of the Word of God, the birds are never going to sing.

Edification is still the main purpose of a church service today, but now it’s based upon doctrine that we draw from the completed New Testament Scriptures. So when here in verse 26 the apostle Paul says, “How is it then brethren,” he is saying, “What then is to be done,” is a little better translation. He has shown the comparative value of tongues and prophecy, the strategic place of doctrinal illumination. Now he says, “Alright, what is to be done then when it comes time to have a church service?” And he tells them, for their day, what is to be done, all of which leads to the primary purpose which is ours today which we approach from a different direction—edification of the people who gather. “Every one of you” is every individual believer in the New Testament church, when you have come together in a local service, every one of you hath a psalm. You provide a song to lead, a song of praise in a service. You have a doctrine. You have the gift of knowledge in operation that classifies truth and you can present doctrinal explanation. You have a tongue, a foreign language delivers a divine revelation from God. And another person has the gift of interpretation which is a translation of that tongue so as to make it useful and also to confirm that what you say you’re saying is indeed what God has said through you. Then you have a revelation which is a direct communication from God through the gift of prophecy in the normal language that people use.

These features of a New Testament church service were provide through the temporary spiritual gifts which were designed to tide the church through its infancy stage until the New Testament was completed for its mature stage. That’s what 1 Corinthians 13:10 told us, that when that which is perfect is come, the neuter New Testament Scripture, then that which is in part, scattered doctrinal understanding through these various spiritual gifts here and there shall be done away, and these gifts leave. They’re for the infancy stage. All gifts are to build up the believers in the local assembly and never for self-edification. Pentecostalism likes to argue that these gifts that they practice are fore their own edification and that is never the case in Scripture.

In 1 Corinthians 14:27-28 are the regulations. Paul says, “If any man speak in a tongue (a foreign language), let it be by two or at the most by three.” At any one service no more than three speakers were to stand up and exercise the gift of tongues in the New Testament church. Two speakers are viewed as ample. Three would be the outside limit. Now the point of this is to prevent an inferior from monopolizing the time of instruction in the service which can be delivered through prophecy.

Another regulation is, “and that by course,” which means that the tongue speakers are to take turns in order that those who are gathered may hear what the individual is saying and thereby may hear the interpreter and thereby may be benefited by this revelation from God through tongues. If you were in a Pentecostal church today you would discover that everybody is jabbering at the same time all over the place. If you were to attend a Full Gospel Business Men’s International breakfast you would find that there may be a dozen or fifteen men who are standing up in the meeting on the floor jabbering at the same time in tongues. It’s a violation of this principle—one-at-a-time. Also this is to allow the Jews who might be present to be able to clearly understand what is being said because the tongues purpose was a sign to the Jews that your day of judgment was coming, and it came in 70 A.D. They had a 40-year grace period.

Now this taking turns is also to guard against emotional fanaticism and disorder in the service. When you get a lot of people speaking in an emotional way all at the same time, it’s contagious. Pretty soon you’ve got the whole place jumping. Then it says that “one interpret.” One person is to interpret the tongues. This can be viewed perhaps in two directions. The word “one” is actually a number, and it may suggest that only one person is to do the translating for all the speakers in the service. Or it may mean simply that one interpretation is to be given for each delivery of tongues. In Pentecostal services today you’ll find somebody who stands up, he lets go with the gibberish, and two or three people stand up and interpret what he says, always in King James language.

Now the tongue speaker is not to speak if there is nobody to interpret. It says in verse 28, “If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church. Let him speak to himself and to god.” If there is not interpreter, and this indicates that you know beforehand that there is an interpreter there. In the New Testament church, if necessary they would stand up and say, “I have a message from God. Is there an interpreter present?” And if there was no interpreter present he sat down and he kept his mouth shut because what he had to say was absolutely useless unless there was somebody to translate. That’s what “interpret” means in the Greek. It means to translate what was said. This incidentally is a command in the Greek. They are not to do this. This is violated regularly again in Pentecostalism. If there is no interpreter, it says talk to yourself and to God. You understand what you’re saying. God understands what you’re saying. Do not speak to someone else. The speaker is not to be his own interpreter because what he says is to be confirmed by the declaration of another just as the prophet’s message is to be confirmed by other prophets. Now these regulations all connote translation of existing languages, not translation of ecstatic gibberish.

In verse 29 you have the words given for the gift of prophecy, this thing that Paul puts in highest esteem. He said, “Let the prophets speak, two or three, and let the others judge.” No more than two or three prophets are to get up and talk in one church meeting, because if they did more than that they would get so much material there would be more than the people could absorb at one time. And time has to be allowed in the service in the New Testament for the exercise of these other spiritual gifts, including tongues. Now a prophet’s message is to be confirmed. Let the others judge as the other prophets say, “Amen,” what you are saying is the truth. This is of God. This was confirmed also by those who had the gift of discernment, that this was a message that was indeed God’s message. But no prophet was to monopolize the time.

Verse 30 says, “If anything be revealed to another” (that should apply to another prophet), then the one who is talking should come to an end and sit down and let another prophet speak. He is not to monopolize the time. Every prophet may speak, but each in his turn.

Verse 31 says, “But you may all prophecy, one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted.” “All may learn” means they may gain spiritual knowledge. “Comforted” means given direction and encouragement in life.

Verse 32 says, “And the spirit of prophets are subject to the prophets.” That is, a prophet has control of himself. A prophet has control of his human spirit and what he delivers through his gift.

Now God does not create confusion in a church service, so Paul in verse 33 says, “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace as in all the churches of the saints.” When God is working in a church service, He produces restraint of emotions. He produces an orderly dignity. When emotional fanaticism and wild boisterous disorder take place it’s a sign of Satan working, not of the Holy Spirit. Again, in Pentecostalism today there is condemnation upon the movement because of the nature of a Pentecostal service. It is anything but decency and in order.

The lusts of the old sin nature and the ignorance of doctrine make false teachers of many preachers. They don’t intend to be false teachers, that is, many times. Sometimes they do. But often they don’t intend to be false teachers. But because of the old sin nature, because of their lack of training, because of their lack of doctrinal understanding, many preachers become false teachers. 1 John 4:1 therefore tells us, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” So many believers today are sincerely responding to what 1 Timothy 4:1 calls the doctrine of demons. Now the demons is not merely flagrant liberalism. It includes whole deceptions of thinking with the emotions. This whole deception of thinking with your emotions is what is included here under false prophets, and that’s today’s charismatic movement.

And a person’s human IQ is no defense against deception by doctrines of demons. I get very tired of college students who come along and think that they are giving me a climactic argument when they repeat to me the testimony of one of their college professors who is a Christian in defense of his practice of speaking in tongues. That is both tiresome, wearisome, and juvenile to the extreme. Somebody with a good human IQ and education is not preserved from doctrines of demons. If he willingly commits himself to emotional domination of the soul, he’s just as big a sucker as the most ignorant that walks the face of the earth. That’s all Satan needs is somebody whose emotions he can manipulate. Satan promotes false concepts about the Holy Spirit therefore to this type of person. So you hear about people tarrying for the Holy Spirit—the Holy Spirit who is here and in us and we are to tarry for Him. You hear about people waiting for their Pentecost, and the day of Pentecost is come and gone, and we don’t have anything like that again, but the results continue. We have people who speak about finding the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a second work of grace, when the Word of God indicates to us that all are baptized into union with Christ, and this is positional truth that preserves us in our salvation. We’re told that there are new revelations available and we just have to wait for somebody to stand up in a church service and announce what God has said. That there are visions that deliver information. That there are voices to be heard.

If you don’t accept that, if you reject the fact that God delivers information today through visions, through voices that people hear, through dreams, then there’s only one way He can deliver information, and that’s through this book, His Bible, and the doctrines that He has recorded in it, and the method that He has provided for you to get it, for a pastor-teacher and the system of grace perception.

**Male Spiritual Leadership**

In verse 34 he touches a very sensitive spot in Pentecostalism today. He says, “Let your women keep silent in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the Lord.” In a Pentecostal service, women are in prominence. It is really a creepy thing to sit in a service and see some monstrous, usually, formidable, juggernaut type of woman standing up there running the show and to see little men running around like peons waiting upon her. Many a woman who is in evangelical churches has this temperament. If she were in Pentecostalism, she would be a star. I have known in my 21 years at Berean a fantastic number of women who have walked through these hallowed halls of ours who would have made beautiful Pentecostalists just by their natural temperament. If they had ever gotten hold of a pulpit, they’d have never let go again. But in Corinth, this is what was happening. Women were up there trying to speak in tongues which is a gift not given to women because it’s delivering information from God to the assembled group. Women were trying to be pastors, act as pastors, which many Pentecostals do today.

One of the seminary professors said that he was talking to a Pentecostal woman and preacher one time, and he asked her, “How do you explain this verse of Paul, ‘Let your women keep silent in the churches’?” And this is an example of what I mean by the inane exegesis that they will come up with. She said, “Oh what that means is that women are to keep the children quiet in the church services. They are to maintain silence while the speaking is going on and the gifts were exercised.”

Well what Paul means here is that if you are a woman, Genesis 3:16 lays down a place of subjection to your husband and to the male in leadership. Obviously, in Corinth the major reason for the disorder from this passage we see indicated was the same reason for that in Pentecostalism today—it is dominated by women. A major violation in Pentecostalism is the result of women functioning. Even major cults have been founded by women. A woman teaching in assembly is out of place. A woman’s teacher in spiritual things is not to be some other woman, but is to be her husband.

Verse 35 says, “And if they will learn anything let them ask her husband at home” for it is the same for a woman to speak in the church. For women to teach men in a worship service gathering of the local church is the same. That’s why the tongues movement today is under a great cloud of shame no matter how famous the personalities on TV are, or other personalities that dignify it. Women with questions about spiritual things should ask their husbands privately at home. This does not mean that she cannot ask the pastor-teacher who is responsible and he is also to instruct, or if she is not married that she cannot ask him or some mature Christian man. But the normal person the married woman is that she asks her husband at home.

Now, isn’t that interesting. Let’s talk to you people who haven’t gotten married here this morning, and maybe to the regret of some of you who have. How many of you women who have been thinking about getting married have ever asked themselves this vital question? “Now I’m going to marry this fellow, but the Word of God says everything spiritual has to come to me through the chain of command of him. I am to seek from him my spiritual guidance in life and instruction.” How many women ask themselves that before they say “yes” to this gentleman? And he may be the biggest spiritual moron there is. And she doesn’t realize that when she says “yes” to this spiritual moron, she is inviting the same role for herself. How many promising women I have seen descend to the spiritual moron level eventually because this is what they married. If you’re not teaching your daughter who is going out with somebody to start asking this prospect some strategic questions about the Bible. Not some easy ones like, “Who made the ark?” Because he can probably figure that out on his own. But I mean start asking him some of these pertinent doctrinal questions. Then you’ll find out something about him. Passages of Scripture that need some interpretation for you.

He’ll do one of two things. He’ll answer you which shows that he knows the Word and what he’s talking about and that he’s qualified to marry you, or else he’ll go out and he’ll find the answer. But if he remains silent, that should be a red flag as big as the side of a barn. This guy is indifferent to spiritual things. Steer clear of him, at least until he shapes up.

Now you go ahead and play the fool if you want to. It’s your life. But I happen to know what I’m talking about. In this church we preach the best doctrine in the world. We preach the soundest insights and application you’ll find any place in 100 miles around here, and we’ve got enough experience to know how these things work. You’re your own priest, but when you find somebody that you’re seriously interested in marrying, then you’d better not get carried away with the fact that he shows you he loves you because he can get physical with you.

I have to smile how often when some fellow wants to convince a girl that he is for her, he proceeds to prove it to by getting physical. What does that prove? That’s a kind of a bad sign. If he gets physical with you, you ought to pull back and say, “Wait a minute.” The order is spiritual comradery, spiritual unity, spiritual intimacy first, and then we get cozy down on a physical level and start taking freedoms with each other. If that isn’t the restrained order, that should be a signal to you. If he was really going to prove it to her, a fellow who is really a good lover is one who knows doctrine. A man that’s oriented to divine viewpoint is the man that knows what love is because he knows what “agape” love is.

I want to tell you something else. A man who is to have a mental attitude free of bitterness on a mental attitude of “agape” love toward his wife cannot have that love until he has developed that quality in his soul in general toward everybody. So don’t be deceived, ladies, because this guy goes to Sunday School and church with you, or that maybe he even owns a Bible for that matter. That doesn’t prove a thing. And don’t you estimate it on any other factors that may surround him except he himself. After the wedding is over, do you know what happens? You go home and you slam the door. And what you’re left with is this knight in shining armor that you have just related yourself to eternally. And when that door slams that’s when you discover that there’s rust on the joints, and he creaks, and he has fallen apart. And when you open up the armor, he’s this shriveled little peanut in there when it comes to spiritual things. So don’t go around saying, “Oh, I just love him so. We just have such a rapport. We just hit it off. I just think about him all the time.” These are inanities of identification that God is speaking to you.

Here’s a good one: If you want to learn something, your husband is your number one teacher. If you don’t have a man that can teach you spiritual things, God pity you. And if you’re not married yet, this is the thing to look for, not the shape and size of his lips or how big his hands are when he wants to get cozy with you. If he doesn’t answer, he doesn’t know. If he doesn’t find out and let you know, he’s bored, and it’s a sign of spiritual indifference and it’s going to get worse. You think he’s the intellectual type who’s passed these points of sensitive commitment of faith to the precious Word of God. That’s what he’s telling you. He’s telling you that he’s looking for a better way than his childish faith in this precious book. You’d better believe it. You’ve got something that’s going to get worse and not get better. This man who thinks he proves his love to you by being physical is going to get to be a very tiresome lover in time.

We were talking about this in a group not so long ago, and there was a young woman in the group. And after a few things were said, she said with a gleam in her eye, “My husband is going to be able to teach me.” Now that’s a smart girl. “My husband is going to be able to teach me.” I think she’s got a couple of ideas as to who the prospects are. But one thing that was clear to her was, “My husband is going to be able to teach me.” That’s the thing she’s going to go for. Not his bankroll. Not his personality. Not how cute he can be with her. Not how much she misses him. But it’s how much he can teach her spiritually, and he’s willing to do it. He’s willing to enter in unashamedly and say, “I am a Christian. I am a Christian in terms of the fundamental doctrinal stands of the Word of God, and I’m proud that this is my position because this is truth and I accept it.” Now that kind of a man is worth having.

This conclusion is in verse 36. Paul gets a little sarcastic here: “What, came the Word of God out from you or came it unto you only?” Paul challenges the conceit and the defiance of apostolic doctrine that was taking place in the Corinthian church. He asks his church, “Did you produce the Word of God that you know so much about what is true and what is not true?” He says, “Did it come to you only? Are you the sole recipients of it, that you are the judges of what God is saying and not saying?”

Pentecostalism today reflects this again—this pride from the delusion that they have more power and truth than non-tongues churches. The tongues advocates are usually very insubordinate to Bible doctrine. That’s why they defy the plain regulations of Scripture. Those who are positive to the Word of God will respond to doctrine about tongues in the Bible. Verses 37-38 say, “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” A man who claims to be a prophet or claims to be a spiritual man will admit that what Paul has written in 1 Corinthians 12 through 14 is divine viewpoint about the practice of tongues in the New Testament church and about the limitation of tongues in the future as it was phased out. Those who reject do so because they are willfully negative to Bible doctrine, so Paul says just let them go ahead and be ignorant. If they’re going to be negative, let them be negative.

Do you see the principle? Some of you people keep tuning yourselves out. Some of you people keep having guilt complexes because the people that you hold the lantern up to don’t sing like the birds. You say, “What’s wrong with me? What have I done wrong? What new technique can I get, throwing open the barn doors and jumping in with my light so they’ll all sing like the birds? You’re bothered by the fact that the rats are heading for the darkness. But the Word of God says if they’re going to be ignorant, and you’ve held up the lantern of the light of the Word of God, then let them be ignorant. Now that’s doctrine. It’s not Christian education, but it’s doctrine. And on this you can stand. Those who reject do so because of their choice. Pentecostalists consider speaking in gibberish a sign of spirituality. That’s part of their ignorance. They forget that the Indian fakers, the Muslim fakers, the spiritistic mediums—all of them speak in this same ecstatic gibberish under demon control and it is not spiritual. Read through 1 John 4:1-4. It gives you that warning. There is plenty of fakery in the world. Even carnal Corinthians here we find are able to use the gift of tongues in the New Testament. So just because they were using the gift of tongues is no sign of spirituality.

1 Corinthians 3:1-4 tells how terribly carnal they were. A spiritual Christian, if he’s really spiritual, is going to accept the teaching about tongues as we have it in these chapters. He’s not going to have to have arrogance and be self-sufficient because he thinks he’s had some experience that proves otherwise. Now this protects us from seeking an experience which is not sanctioned by Scripture in the first place. All of our experiences that we do have are evaluated in the light of the Word of God on the basis of the common laws of interpretation and bible exegesis.

Most Pentecostal leaders you will find are ill-equipped to teach doctrine, but their own training. What they do consequently is never rise above the fallacies of the group that they grew up in or that they committed themselves to. They are not equipped in training to deal with sound doctrine. Consequently they go along in the old paths. The modern tongues movement, among those who are cultured and educated, still thrives because these adherents who are cultured and educated also have a poor grasp of doctrine. But willful ignorance in the face of the lantern of sound doctrine will cause you to harden in your error and be blind to satanic influences.

Verses 39 and 40 give us a summary of the chapter. Paul says, “Wherefore brethren, covet to prophesy, forbid not to speak with tongues (in the New Testament—both of these were operational). Let all things be done decently and in order.” The local New Testament congregation should desire above all the gift of prophecy which is not forbidden—the proper exercise under the regulations listed here under the gift of tongues. These things are not directly applicable to us today. There are no more revelations or messages directly from God. This is all to be done decently and in order, not indecently. Order in what is important. Order in what comes one after another. Following the regulations for tongues would ensure this in the New Testament church.

Today the tongues movement is wild, indecent, and a disorderly emotional binge. The word “decently” means “gracefully” in the Greek: “euschemonos.” It means gracefully, that is, in good Christian taste, fittingly. And “order” is “taxis,” which means “an arrangement,” in contrast to confusion. A church service should be … fittingly in order and things lined up in a proper way.

Now tongues in Acts and 1 Corinthians, just to compare for just a moment. I remind you that tongues in the book of Acts that we’ve looked at, and now we’ve looked at it in 1 Corinthians, are both the same. Both existed as foreign languages. They’re the same words in the Greek in both books. Both were produced by men under control of the Holy Spirit exercising the gift of tongues. Both had significance as signs to the Jews and to the new age of grace. Tongues did have a different emphasis in Acts. In Acts the emphasis was on tongues as a sign to the Jews and of the judgment coming upon the nation. It also had an indication of a sign, it was used as a sign to indicate ethnic groups: Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles included in the church. In 1 Corinthians the emphasis is on edification of the local church congregation.

Now the regulation on tongues were given orally. Paul wrote this book of 1 Corinthians from Ephesus. He wrote the book on his third missionary journey. It was on his third missionary journey that the fourth example of tongue-speaking of the disciples of John which were recorded in the book of Acts chapter 19 took place. It was while Paul was in Ephesus that he ran across these disciples of John who then spoke in tongues as he explained to them the new age of grace and it was from that city that he wrote 1 Corinthians.

I want to show you that Acts and 1 Corinthians are close together relative to these regulations. Some people like to say, “Well, Acts came along and then a long time later came 1 Corinthians and they had to write these regulations, and that Acts tongues is different than 1 Corinthians tongues.” That is not so. They’re very closely connected. There is no break whatsoever.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1971